



Office of the Employer Adviser

Annual Report

2010-2011

Annual Report
2010 - 2011

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INDEX

Page

A Message from the Director	1-2
Part 1 OEA Mandate	3
Part 2 Overview of Program and Activities.....	4-16
Part 3 OEA Clients	17-25
Appendix A: OEA Performance Measures 2010-11.....	26-28
Appendix B: OEA Financial Report 2010-11	29-30
Appendix C: OEA Organization Chart.....	31
Contact Us	32



A Message from the Director

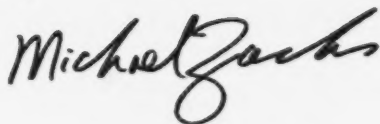
I am pleased to submit this report on the OEA's activities for 2010 - 2011.

The OEA continues to provide excellent service to Ontario employers who have remained highly satisfied with our advice and representation services. Over ninety percent of our clients were willing to recommend the OEA to other employers.

This was a particularly busy year for the OEA. The release of the WSIB's new Work Reintegration Policies and the work of the Arthurs Funding Review has put additional pressures on our staff. Both initiatives portend significant change in how the WSIB may do its business in the years to come, and how the OEA will have to adapt. We started this process this year by developing and delivering a variety of presentations to our clients and stakeholders on these developments.

We endeavour to provide the best professional advice and representation services we can, and offer more comprehensive and current information on our website and through our electronic bulletins. Our Employer Guides for the construction and non-construction sectors are regularly updated so they remain relevant, making critical information more accessible to employers. We have spoken at numerous conferences and workshops on a variety of WSIB issues to ensure that employers have current and necessary information they need to help them manage their WSIB obligations.

Again, I wish to express my appreciation to our stakeholders whose continued support is critical to our success, and to my staff for their dedication and commitment to serving the employers of Ontario.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Zacks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'M' and 'Z'.

Michael Zacks
Acting Director

Part 1 OEA Mandate

The mandate of the Office of the Employer Adviser is established by Section 176(2) of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 ("the WSIA"),

... to educate, advise and represent primarily those employers with fewer than 100 employees, in issues arising under the WSIA.

Our vision and mission flow from this legislative mandate:

OEA VISION

An Ontario in which small and medium-sized businesses operate safe, fair and high-performing workplaces that contribute to a vibrant, competitive economy.

OEA MISSION

The OEA's mission is to be the premier organization for providing representation, advice and education to Ontario employers regarding workplace safety and insurance matters.

The Director of the OEA is an Order-in-Council appointment. Michael Zacks, OEA General Counsel, was appointed by Ministerial letter, in 2004, to act in this position pending an Order-in-Council appointment.

Part 2 Overview of Programs and Activities

Advisory Services

Workplace safety and insurance remains one of the critical responsibilities of Ontario employers. The OEA provides advice to help employers meet their obligations under the WSI (Workplace Safety and Insurance) system in a timely and cost effective manner. Employers rely on our advice to better understand a very complex program, avoid errors and ultimately to better safeguard their workplaces and their workers. Timely access to accurate information means that clients make informed decisions, obtain better business outcomes, increase their self reliance and avoid appeals.

Although the OEA's mandate is to primarily serve employers with fewer than 100 workers, Advice Centre personnel provide just-in-time counsel to all Ontario employers who have WSI questions or concerns. Having access to the expertise of the OEA's trained staff provides all employers with an equal playing field, enabling them to make good business decisions, avoiding costly mistakes, or incurring unnecessary penalties. No fees are payable for OEA services, since the agency is funded by the WSIB (Workplace Safety and Insurance Board), ensuring availability of expert and confidential advice whenever an employer requires it. This is especially important for small employers, since they typically do not have such expert resources in-house.

The OEA Advice Centre is staffed by four Intake Advisers located in its Toronto head office, who take calls from Ontario employers about their workplace safety insurance concerns. The Advice Centre also accepts e-mail enquiries, meaning that employers can table their issues outside business hours, if that is most convenient; these queries often result in a return phone call from an Intake Adviser to discuss the matter in greater depth.

The circumstances of each call are different and the agency's trained intake advisers provide advice that is detailed, thorough and tailored to the business realities of each client. Calls may be as brief as five minutes, for simple issues such as where to find a WSIB form, to hour plus sessions to completely discuss such complex matters as how to return an injured worker to work, or options, if any, for dealing with a large or unexpected premium increase. Clients appreciate the Advice Centre's emphasis on answering calls live – i.e. talking to them when they call in, whenever possible – so that the advisers work to the employer's schedules, talking to them when it is convenient for them, providing prompt and complete advice.

Client satisfaction with services provided by the Advice Centre, as measured through random telephone surveys, is 97.9%. Clients recommending the services of the OEA to other employers, historically an even more significant indicator of overall satisfaction, is also 97.9%. These numbers are higher than last year – 91% and 95% respectively – and are significantly higher than the 90% target levels. The OEA is very pleased to be able to report this high level of satisfaction, year after year. It speaks very well to the calibre of the advice provided by the agency's staff and their commitment to serving the needs of its clients.

The agency continues to focus on dealing with employer enquiries as quickly as possible. During this reporting period 84.2% of all incoming calls went directly to an adviser, with the remainder responded to within one business day. The comparable figure for 2009-10 was 72.5%; both exceeding the 70% target for 'answering calls live'. Getting such immediate access to expert advice means time saved for employers, and ensures that matters are addressed – and resolved – when and as the need arises.

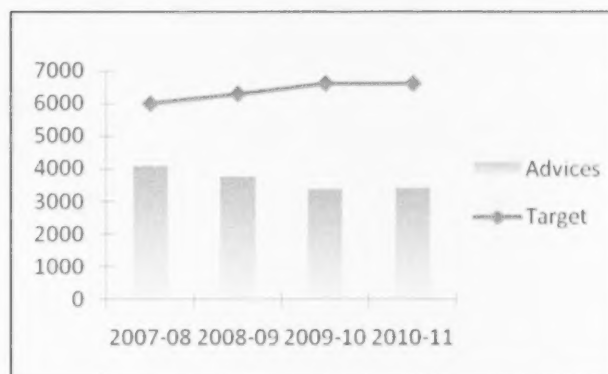
Similarly, e-mail enquiries are responded to on a priority basis, within one business day.

OEA Employer Specialists are also available to provide advice. There are sixteen Employer Specialists located in communities throughout Ontario. Many employers have

come to know their local specialist through referrals from the WSIB, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal (WSIAT), health and safety associations, community and business groups, or existing and former OEA clients. In addition, Employer Specialists routinely speak, by invitation, at their local Chambers of Commerce and other community groups. Employers often establish regular, on-going relationships with their regional representatives; regional contact and increasing local presence continues to be an outreach priority for the OEA.

Fiscal 2010-11 saw the instances of advice provided to Ontario employers by the call centre increase for the first time since 2007-08. While only a moderate increase – 3,404 versus 3,386 for the last fiscal year – it is a significant change, aligning with overall increases in advices provided via other delivery channels. The dedication to maintaining a high level of training and expertise in call centre personnel is important to being able to provide the technical, one-on-one advice required by employers. There is no longer only one access point to use the OEA's advice services, and more and more clients are availing themselves of the variety of delivery options, choosing the one that is most convenient. The turnaround in advice levels for the call centre is indicative of the positive impact of the agency's outreach efforts.

Figure 1
Instances of Advice ('Advices') to Employers



The agency has established a whole new category of advice services, available through the use of Google analytics for the new website. This statistic reflects the use of the website by employers seeking comprehensive information about the WSI system and their obligations and rights. Available 24/7, from the time it went live in May 2010, until the end of March 2011, the website delivered 8,114 'web advices'. This is an average of more than 800 per month. The definition of a 'web advice' is: a user who spent more than 1 minute on the website *and* accessed more than 3 pages of web content, and excludes anyone leaving the website after just accessing the home page. Note that 'hits' on the website, which do not reflect this level of information-gathering, are ten times greater. These three 'web advice' criteria are stringent and serve to identify users who are searching the OEA website, and getting the advice they require to address their concerns and inform their actions.

The revised website is more user-friendly and accessible to Ontario employers than the previous one. E-mail queries sent to the Advice Centre using the online form available to users of the website were down in 2010-11 by 13% (121 versus 139) over the previous fiscal year, reflecting the greater availability of information that employers need to effectively navigate the WSI system – i.e. the easy search capabilities and access to well-organized problem-oriented information, means that employers can more readily find answers for uncomplicated, employer focused worker's compensation issues.

Another indicator of the success of the agency's web-based education strategy is the number of advices provided in 2010-11 to clients who called the Advice Centre as a result of using the OEA website. The number of such advices this year was 259, up 43.9% from the last year's all-time high of 180. This can be explained as a result of the website's division into construction and non-construction focused portals, and the more intuitive and user-friendly organization of information within those divisions. Overall there was a 3% increase in advices to employers who reported being referred by a website – the OEA's or a stakeholder website where there were links to *employeradviser.ca*.

The updated website appears to be working for Ontario employers, and ensures, in conjunction with the availability of live Advice Centre service, that employers have ready access to the information they need, when they need it, to meet their WSI demands.

It is worth noting that anecdotally, the Intake Advisers continue to report that 'simple' queries about such things as registration and accident reporting, which historically comprised a significant portion of Advice Centre calls, are a low proportion of incoming advice calls. Most calls to the Advice Centre now require more intensive problem solving, unique to the employer. Similarly, referrals to Employer Specialists, as a percentage of advices per se, continue to be higher than historical levels. This is another indicator of the increased complexity of employer issues now forming the core business of the agency.

The OEA continues to have its system partners include references to their services and toll free number in letters and publications (e.g. the WSIB form letters routinely direct employers needing assistance to the OEA); and the Ontario Business Connects (OBC) program, delivered through Service Ontario, remains an important vehicle for the widespread distribution of the agency's popular Employer Guides – both the non-construction and construction versions.

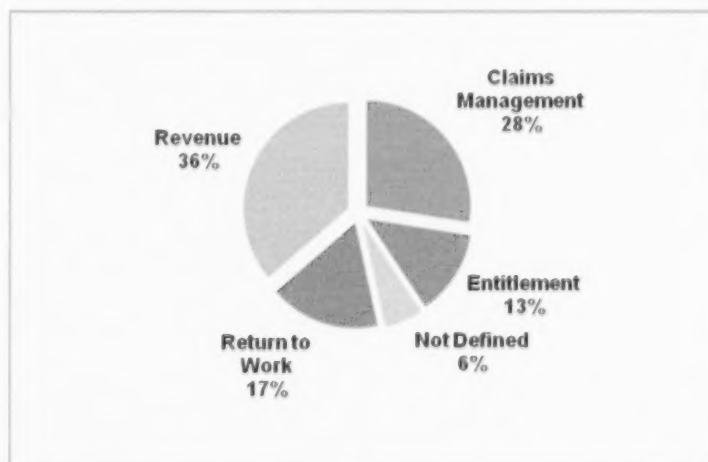
As noted in previous reports, a small employer typically 'needs' advice services only once every eight years or so. It remains a challenge for the OEA to be 'front-of-mind' as a primary resource for Ontario employers – increasing awareness in all business sectors of our free, expert and confidential services and sustaining awareness among our client community remain high priority outreach focuses.

As part of these efforts, in 2010-11 the OEA increased the number of informational sessions it provided to stakeholder groups covering such things as the WSIB's work re-integration policies and other topics as requested. Additional detail about these efforts is contained in the "Value to Clients" section of this Report.

Analysis of the subject of the advice being provided shows that more inquiries continue to be about Revenue issues than anything else; at 36% this is more than last year (31%), and close to the high of the previous reporting period (38%). As with previous fiscal reports, the second most important focus of concern was Claims Management, at 25%.

Return to Work remains a significant focus, reflecting the policy changes implemented by the Board during this reporting period. Entitlement is the fourth most common area of inquiry, a consistent placement year over year. Figure 2, overall, is indicative of the workplace safety and insurance issues facing Ontario employers and their business priorities. Specifically, such employer concerns as the premiums they are being charged to fund the system – including issues such as the rate group where they have been classified, the Board's remittance practices, independent operator status, etc. - and the widespread lack of knowledge in the employer community about their obligations under the WSIA.

Figure 2
Advice Issues 2010-2011



As noted, our clients are generally very satisfied with the services provided by the OEA, and it is felt that at least part of that satisfaction is due to the high percentage of Advice

calls that are taken 'live'; this involves getting an Intake Adviser on the line directly, rather than going into voice-mail and waiting for a return phone call at a time that may not be as convenient for the inquiring employer, or when the problem has resolved itself (either positively or negatively). The answer live rate was 84.2% for 2010-11, significantly higher than the 72.5 per cent reported last year. In both reporting periods the Advice Centre exceeded its target of answering 70% of calls live.

Representation Services

According to the OEA's mandate, the agency primarily represents employers with fewer than 100 employees, in disputes arising under the WSIA at both the WSIB and at the WSIAT (see Figure 5, page 17). At the operating level of the WSIB, representation services involve negotiation, which is provided by an Intake Adviser or by an Employer Specialist, by means of telephone calls and/or correspondence. At the two appeal levels (WSIB Appeals Branch and WSIAT), as well as in return-to-work or work re-integration negotiations, Employer Specialists provide the representation services. At this level, representation involves a range of activities, from negotiation to appearing at mediations or hearings with the employer and conducting the case on their behalf.

The OEA, through its representation services, plays an important role in reducing conflict in the WSI system. OEA Intake Advisers and Employer Specialists maintain good working relationships with staff at the WSIB operating levels, and contact them early in a new case to discuss resolution options. All agency staff works with their WSIB counterparts to ensure that Ontario employers have high quality representation within the system. The agency continues to focus on reaching unrepresented employers, working with the Board to have referrals made to the OEA where appropriate. Staff involvement in RTW (return to work) and WR (work reintegration) plans and negotiations ensures an equal footing for both workplace parties, and

supports a solution that returns employees to the job in a timely, cost-effective manner, removing some strain from the system. Similarly, agency staff works closely with the WSIB Collections Branch, to facilitate the payment of premiums that are due and to ensure that employers pay their share in a way that supports their on-going business needs.

Negotiations continue to be a preferred interim resolution step, since they usually offer a faster, more efficient solution. Because employers need to, and have a preference for, spending their resources on activities associated with direct contributions to their profitability, an appeal is usually the second-choice dispute resolution alternative. In response to this employer bias, the OEA continues to promote the early resolution of disputes. Performance Measure A1 (see Appendix A) reflects the agency's achievement in this effort: in 2010-11 the OEA resolved 69% of disputes without a hearing, slightly lower than its target of 70%, but higher than last year's 66% achievement. Given that OEA staff have no direct control over whether an employer and/or worker agrees to a negotiated settlement, the agency is pleased with the way it is able to contribute to the lessening of conflict within the WSI system, through the resolution of so many disputes without a hearing.

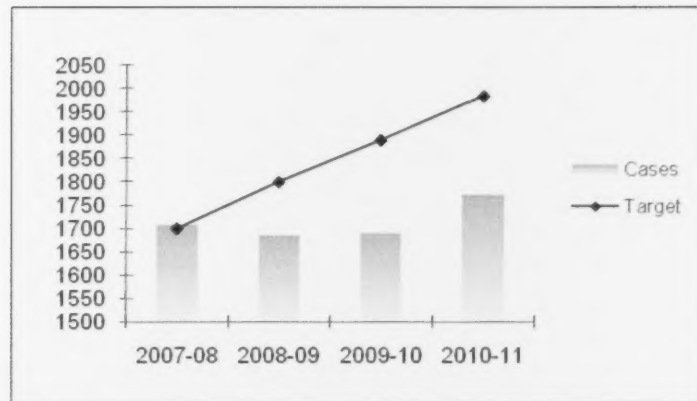
While these efforts often successfully conclude cases at the operating level of the WSIB, some cases do proceed to appeal. Also, some employers do not learn of the availability of OEA (free) services until their case has progressed to the appeal stage. Of the 1,772 cases worked on in 2010-11, Employer Specialists represented employers in 260 cases that involved mediations/negotiations – slightly lower than last year's comparable figures of 1,691 cases worked on, with 269 mediations. Whether cases proceed to appeal or not, agency staff always strive to resolve matters as soon as possible. In a system where 95% of appeals are worker-driven, OEA involvement improves balance in the system, ensuring that employers' perspectives and needs are being both represented and respected.

Further analysis of the 1,772 cases worked on during the 2010-11 reporting period reveals the following:

- 738, or 42%, were resolved, compared to 35% for last year;
- 571 cases, or 32%, were new in-year, approximately 100 fewer than the number opened during the last reporting period. The timelines to resolve employers' appeals continue to be long, reflected in the significant carryover of cases year to year;
- 27% had a successful outcome for the client, virtually identical to last year's 28% figure. Note that many cases have multiple levels of results and appeals, and success at one level may be overturned at the next. The 27% figure for 2010-11 indicates the level of success across the various levels, and not final results, and accords with the inherent default for the system to favour the worker.

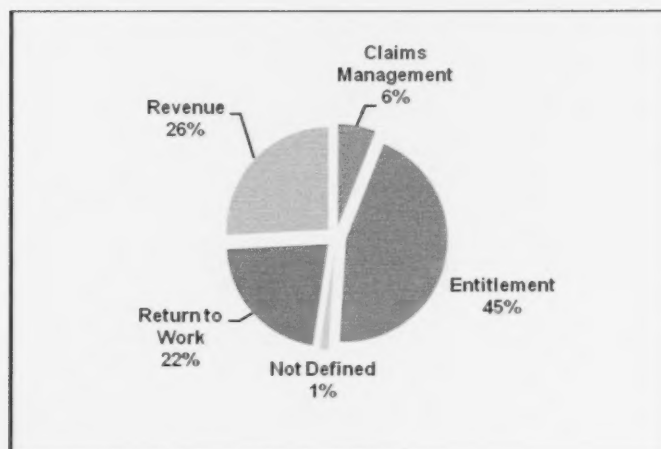
With regard to client satisfaction, 96.2% of employers surveyed indicated that they were satisfied with their OEA representation, up from 94.1% last year; 98.4% said that they would recommend our services to others, considerably higher than last year's figure of 91.2%. All are significantly higher than the target level of 90% and indicate an employer community that is very appreciative of the work done on their behalf by agency staff. The satisfaction measurement itself is often tainted by whether the employer won or lost their appeal, since they often find it difficult to separate the decision from their representation, hence the difference between the two measures. It remains a challenge for OEA staff to educate employers to ensure that dissatisfaction with a WSIB/WSIAT decision is not inappropriately registered as dissatisfaction with their representation services.

Figure 3
Cases Worked On, 2010-11



In comparison with the data for instances of advice, analysis of the representation issues shows Entitlement to be the number one concern of employers, not Revenue. Virtually identical with previous years, Revenue issues are second and Return to Work is also very significant, in third place, with Claims Management being the issue for only about 6% of employers. These statistics are reflective of the areas having the biggest impact on employers, and where agency assistance can be of the most benefit to them.

Figure 4
Case Issues 2010-11



Education of Employers

On average, a small employer has a workplace injury occur once every eight years. At the time of the injury, the employer's need for information about claims management and return to work is acute. Chances are, however, that most small business owners do not have the requisite information at their fingertips, since most of their time and resources are of necessity focused on business growth and profitability. Compounding this lack of information is the fact that few small employers have the time or available staff to attend seminars or education sessions, either when the need is acute, or proactively.

Accordingly, the OEA's educational strategy evolved from one based on having employers attend intensive adult-education workshops, to a multi-channel approach which makes information available to employers in a format that is timely, relevant and accessible. The focus of the agency's education strategy in recent years has been to ensure that employers expand their understanding of the WSI system as part of the representation process; posting useful information and tools on the OEA website; and assisting stakeholders – interest groups/employer advocacy organizations, stakeholder employer associations, etc. - with their education initiatives where appropriate.

In 2010-11, the OEA continued to meet the need in the employer community for additional information about Return to Work and Claims Management and started to provide briefings about the Board's new Work Reintegration policies. These presentations were provided in cooperation with the Employers Advocacy Council (EAC), and at various Industrial Accident Prevention Association (IAPA) shows, as well as in conjunction with various other stakeholder groups, including safety associations, trade associations, etc. More than 77 presentations were made to different interest groups about the role of the OEA, WSIB policies, policy changes and their impact on Ontario employers. For the first time, webinars were a significant presentation vehicle, allowing for the direct delivery of relevant information to employers at locations

convenient to them, and with the least time commitment. In all, more than 1,450 employers attended an OEA presentation/briefing/workshop during the 2010-11 fiscal year, an increase in attendance of more than 15% over the previous reporting period. Combined with last year's 70% increase, it appears that the agency is reaching a significant number of Ontario employers, on an on-going basis. The OEA will continue to accept invitations to develop and maintain this educational channel and has plans to initiate a series of webinars independently in 2011-12.

One of the goals of the agency's representation services is to build self-reliance for employers within the WSI system, by making sure that they understand their rights and obligations under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act. This includes teaching employers how to improve their claims management and return-to-work procedures, and how the WSIB's experience rating system works, so that employers will be more independent and self-reliant in the future. Performance Measure A2 (see Appendix A) shows the proportion of OEA clients who used agency services for the first time in 2010-11. Approximately 54% of advices were provided to new contacts in 2010-11, similar to the 56% reported for 2009-10. The agency will continue to try to reach as many Ontario employers as possible through its education and outreach efforts.

On the representation side, 43% of the OEA's new cases in 2010-11 were first time clients, more in line with 2008-09 levels (39.5%), than last year's 74% achievement. Note that in 2007-08 this figure was only 14.2%, so this statistic may be in the process of establishing a new equilibrium, reflective of the agency's extensive, on-going, outreach efforts.

In addition to the 'hands-on' education provided through casework, the OEA strives to meet the needs of its broad customer base by providing WSIB-related information through a variety of access/delivery mechanisms:

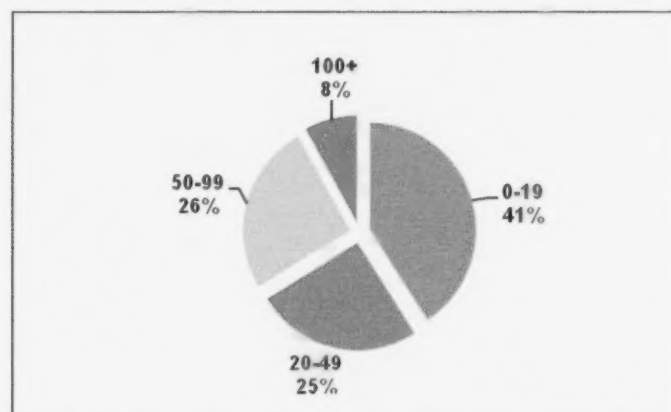
- Current content and notices of presentations and other meetings are maintained on the www.employeradviser.ca website.
- E-bulletins continue to go out to the OEA client database up to eight times per year in newsletter format. Three regular newsletters were digitally delivered in 2010-11; and five 'special' bulletins - just-in-time e-mailed delivery of information and policy changes – were also sent out. Revision of the newsletter format of the e-bulletins is scheduled for 2011-12, to mimic the look and feel of the new website and enhance user friendliness.
- E-bulletins continue to be archived on the OEA website, with current e-bulletin content showcased as the most recent website updates. Employers using the site can sign up for e-bulletin subscriptions while visiting.
- The OEA now has four versions of its very popular Employers Guide; available in English and French are guides specifically targeted for Non-Construction and Construction employers. Filled with information about such things as who should register with WSIB, how to do so, what an employer's rights and responsibilities are under the WSIA, etc., the guides serve as employer-group specific ready references for soon-to-be employers as well as those engaged in small to medium sized businesses. The construction/non-construction separation is reflected in the website setup, and ensures that employers can find information for their business type easily. Hard copy editions continue to be disseminated through Service Ontario and Ontario Business Connects locations and as personal handouts to employers by staff. In 2010-11 approximately 4,800 Employers Guides – 1,710 Construction and 3,100 Non-Construction – were provided to Ontario employers.

Part 3 OEA Clients

As noted previously, the OEA's mandate is to serve primarily those employers with fewer than 100 workers. The merit review undertaken before the OEA represents an employer includes determining their size. The agency only represents employers with more than 100 workers where the issues involved could set precedents, where highly complex medical/legal issues need to be addressed or where other extenuating circumstances are involved, and is subject to management approval. In fiscal 2010-11, 8% of clients provided with agency representation had more than 100 employees.

It is not administratively viable to screen employers contacting the call centre in order to deny advice to those with more than 100 employees; and permitting access to advice to all Ontario employers is also accepted as beneficial to the system, overall. Thus 17.1% of all advices for 2010-11 were provided to employers with 100 plus employees. This is significantly greater than the 9.6% level of fiscal 2009-10, but more in line with the 14.2% level of the previous year. Last year may be interpreted as somewhat anomalous. The OEA will continue to provide advice services to as many of Ontario employers as contact us.

Figure 5
Breakdown of OEA Representation Clients by Company Size (number of employees)
2010-11



The sectoral analysis below is based upon WSIB classifications. The breakdown is consistent with the prevalence of small to medium sized employers in the different industry sectors. The construction industry continues to be the agency's largest client group at 34%, a slight increase (from 30%) from the last reporting period, indicative of the significant amount of change in the Board's policies, pending and implemented, affecting this sector. Other sectors are little changed from previous reporting periods, mirroring the overall business distribution of Ontario employers.

Figure 6
Breakdown of OEA Clients by WSIB Industry Sector
2010-11

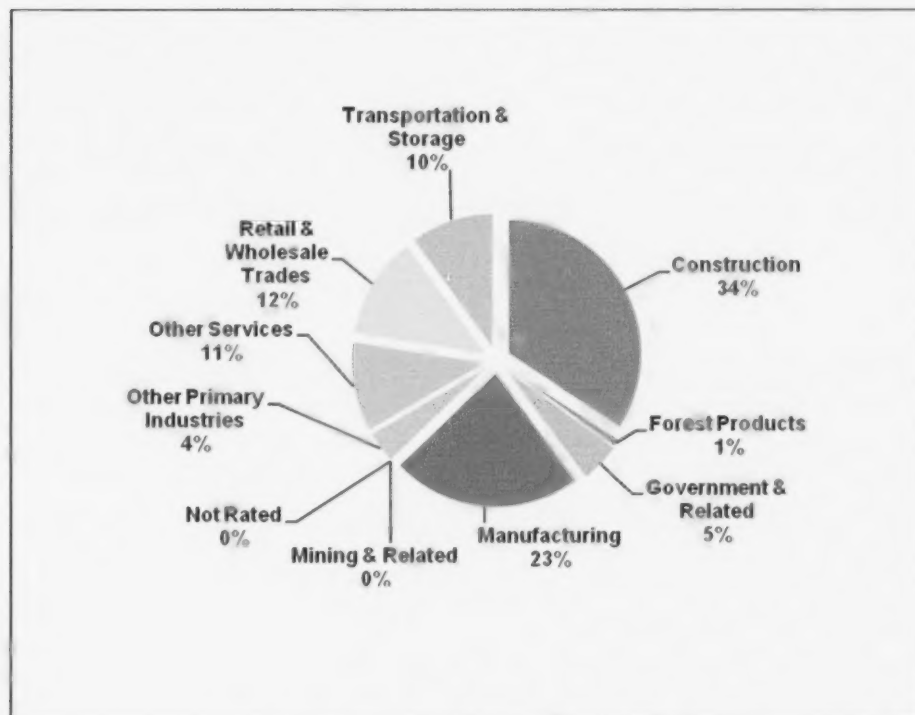
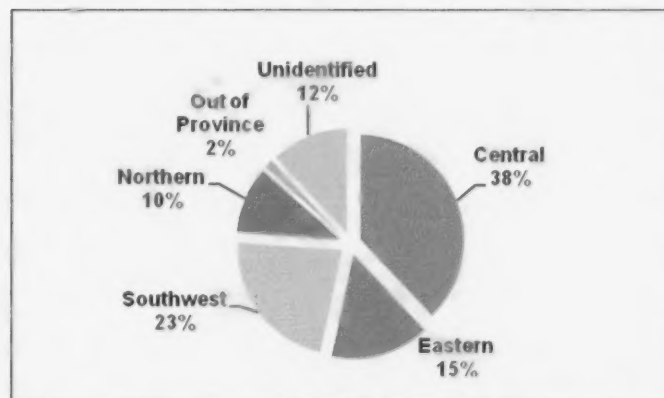


Figure 7 provides the breakdown of the regional distribution of OEA clients for 2010-11. Service delivery appears to reflect the population and business demographics of the province, with the Central area, which includes the Greater Toronto Area, comprising the largest client group. The distribution is virtually identical to last year. The agency's location of Employer Specialists around the province enables the provision of representation services to employers in their local area, as required.

Figure 7
Breakdown of OEA Clients by Location
(Postal Code)
2010-11



Value to Clients

The one historic and consistent comment made by OEA clients, when asked, is that the agency needs to have a higher profile – more employers need to know of the availability of the agency's key workplace safety and insurance services provided free-of-charge to Ontario employers. The OEA's outreach program was created to address this need and encompasses a wide range of activities designed to heighten awareness among as many employer communities and employers as possible.

Activities during the 2010-11 reporting period included:

- The continued placement of informational newspaper ads. Ads were run across Ontario, 12 in English-language publications, and 10 in various other ethnic-specific newspapers. There was a shift in focus this year to targeted, industry-specific ads, with 4 of the English ads being placed in the 'Daily Commercial News', a construction industry publication.
- Additions to the employer groups who receive articles on workplace safety and insurance related topics to distribute to their members on a regular, on-going basis. As well as such groups as Tim Horton's, and the OADA (Ontario Automobile Dealers Association), the Ontario Agri-Business Association, Ontario Concrete and Drain Contractors Association and Sarnia Construction Association are now part of the agency's publication group.
- Participation in eleven conferences and trade shows and summits hosted by various employer groups and associations. The agency also continued to participate in IAPA tradeshow.
- Continuation of focus on the construction sector. Additional extra outreach efforts were targeted at the service, manufacturing and farming and agriculture sectors, with mixed results. Statistics for advices provided for the farming/agriculture group remained flat, year-over-year, and went down for manufacturing. They remain targets for more outreach activities in 2011-12.

- Seventeen additional employer associations/groups have added links to the OEA website to theirs, under such headings as '*helpful web site links*'.
- Twenty-four safety groups scheduled presentations on claims management and return to work, largely as a result of last year's outreach efforts.
- More than twenty presentations/briefings/webinars were provided by the OEA's Director to various industry groups and stakeholders, explaining Board policies and their likely impact.
- In total, more than seventy-seven presentations on such topics as claims management, return to work, work reintegration, and appeals were provided to various stakeholder and employer groups. More than 1,450 employer representatives attended, an increase of approximately 15% from last year.
- Distribution of more than 2000 of 'Appeals' bookmarks. These bookmarks outline the services available from the OEA with regard to the WSIB appeals process. They are primarily used by the WSIAT as an enclosure in their mailings to employers about their upcoming Appeal.
- 3,100 Non-Construction and 1,710 Construction Employers Guides were distributed through various employer associations, government business centres and trade shows. More than 1,250 of the Guides (regardless of type) were handed out directly by staff at trade shows and presentations. This is significantly lower than last year's distribution, but the Guides remain a very important vehicle to get key information into employers' hands, in an easily accessible format.

New Website

A primary focus for 2010-11, carried over from the previous fiscal year, was the replacement and up-dating of the OEA website. This was achieved in May 2010, when the new website – divided into Construction and Non-Construction portals accessed from the same www.employeradviser.ca home page – went live. The goals to change

the text-heavy format, make the site more user-friendly, up-to-date with regard to technology and visually more appealing were more than met.

As outlined earlier in the report, traffic to the website is significant. Our website analytics delineate traffic flow to the site; how frequently users view pages; what pages receive the heaviest traffic; and how long users typically spend online, finding what they need. All indications are that users are finding the site very helpful. Defining a 'web advice' as an access that lasts longer than a minute, *and* is 3 pages or more, with the inclusion of no users who leave after visiting only the home page, more than 8,114 users obtained help from the site from the end of May 2010 through March 31st, 2011. [Note that changing the criteria to 'users accessing 3 plus pages *and* spending two or more minutes on the website, including no users who left the site after visiting only the home page' brings the number of web advices down to 6,110 – still a very significant number. Setting up criteria such as these is important in order to arrive at a 'real number, i.e. one that does not include use of the website by OEA staff, etc., which would artificially inflate the 'advice' metric.] Usage pattern remains fairly consistent, month-over-month. It is clear that many Ontario employers are benefiting from having so much information available 24/7 on the OEA website.

In addition, in 2010-11, the agency continued to track OEA 'savings' - i.e. money saved by a client employer as a direct and immediate result of the agency's involvement. Savings include such things as a favourable appeal outcome which reversed a decision of original entitlement; or a change to a classification ruling made in an employer's favour, etc. Savings amounted to more than \$2,267,700 in fiscal 2010-11, which is almost three times the 2009-10 total and a third more than the first time this metric was reported in 2008-09. These savings figures represent a very significant contribution to the bottom-line for Ontario's small-employer community. Note that these amounts are straightforward totals of one-time savings from rebates or credits or charges not-incurred. They do not include any projection of future or ongoing savings based on

these favourable outcomes, so the ongoing benefit is far in excess of the numbers being reported.

The OEA will continue to monitor its effectiveness with regard to its clients' out-of-pocket costs and savings.

Client Testimonials

We are pleased to provide the following excerpts from communications received from OEA clients, commenting on the services they received from its staff:

Please accept my sincere appreciation for all of your hard work and dedication on this matter. It was a pleasure having the opportunity to meet and work with you. I would not hesitate to recommend the services of the 'Office of the Employer' to anyone who may require such services.

M.W.
Woodbridge

*The appeal process was originated by you and it was successfully completed last month. It was possible only due to the existence of your agency that provides the employers with the necessary guidance and assistance.
...your persistence...and your constant contact... was impeccable and well appreciated.*

R.L.
Toronto

I thank you and [staff member] very, very much for the facilitation of the presentation by [staff member]. [Staff member's] presentation skills are outstanding and he is always such a pleasure to have present! He has so much information to impart and I received an e-mail from one of the attendees saying that he's the best presenter I've given them all year!

E.D.
Niagara

I wish to thank you very much for your thorough review. Even though we are disappointed with the findings you made it understandable and in layman's terms.

B.H.
Ottawa

I found [staff member] very professional and very helpful when I called into the Advice Centre.

J.H.
Newmarket

I wish to thank you for the excellent service that you provided us concerning our W.S.I.B. Hearing...I was impressed that you came to our office and did a very thorough information gathering. Due to your efforts our Hearing had a positive outcome.

J.C.
Guelph

Many thanks [staff member]. We greatly appreciated your help and expertise. Definitely one of the "Good Guys" out there.

D.B.
Ottawa

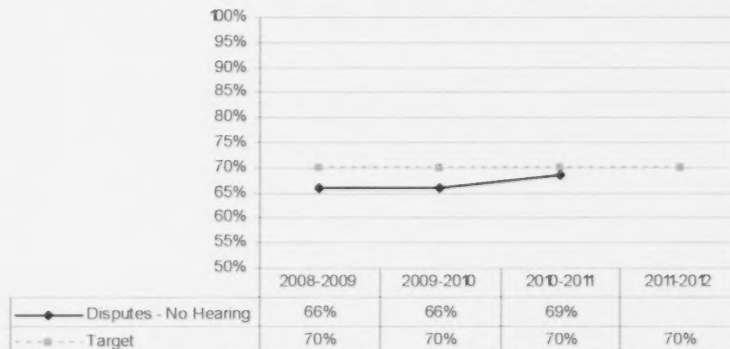
Appendix A: OEA Performance Measures 2010-2011

Key Activities: Advice and Representation Services

A1

Performance measure for 2010-2011: Percentage of disputes resolved without a hearing

Percentage of Disputes Resolved without a Hearing



Agency Contribution

OEA staff employs alternate dispute resolution strategies such as negotiation and mediation to help employers resolve disputes at an earlier stage.

In revenue matters where the dispute only involves two parties (i.e. the WSIB and the employer), every effort is made to resolve matters at the operating level. However, 95% of appeals are worker-driven and employers often contact the OEA for assistance after the dispute has proceeded to the appeal level. This limits the target that can realistically be achieved.

What does the graph show?

While the OEA consistently contributes to the reduction of adversity in the workplace safety and insurance system and helping employers to manage disputes more efficiently and effectively, the measure is not directly controlled or controllable by the OEA. Ultimately, since most appeals are worker-driven and employers have the final decision on whether or not to settle prior to a hearing, this measure will fluctuate according to employer climate and issues in any given year. This performance measure is consistently between 65-70%, indicating that the OEA continues to help a substantial number of employers prior to the hearing stage.

2010-11 Commitments

The commitment for 2010-11 was 70% of disputes resolved without a hearing.

Long-term Target

The long-term target is 70%

☐ Proposed for Publication

☐ Internal Use Only

☒ Existing Measure

☐ New Measure

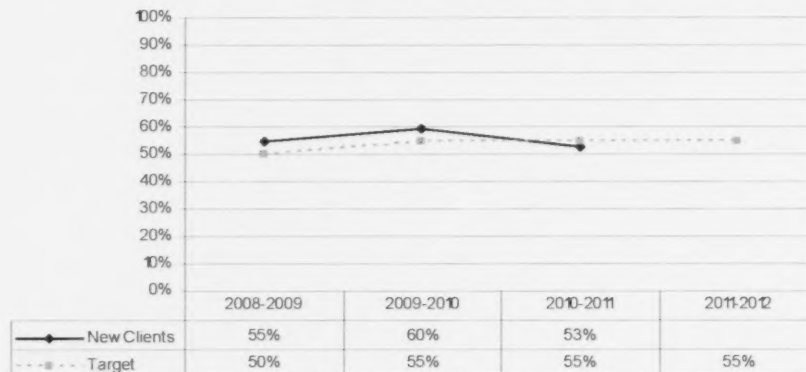
Appendix A: OEA Performance Measures 2010-2011 (cont'd)

Key Activities: Advice and Representation Services

A2

Performance measure for 2010-2011: Percentage of clients served in year that used OEA services for the first time.

Percentage of New Clients Served



Agency Contribution

Client feedback consistently calls on the OEA to ensure that more employers are aware of our services. The OEA also strives to ensure that employers become more self-reliant through casework.

This measure helps to determine whether we are expanding our reach to those eligible employers who are paying for OEA services in their WSIB premiums, but who have not previously accessed our services.

What does the graph show?

The OEA's outreach efforts are allowing the agency to reach new clients, ensuring that more Ontario employers avail themselves of the agency's free, expert and confidential services.

2010-11 Commitments

The commitment for 2010-11 was 55% new clients served in year. This target was almost met, with an achievement of 53%.

Long-term Target

The long-term target is 55%.

☐ Proposed for Publication

☐ Internal Use Only

☒ Existing Measure

☐ New Measure

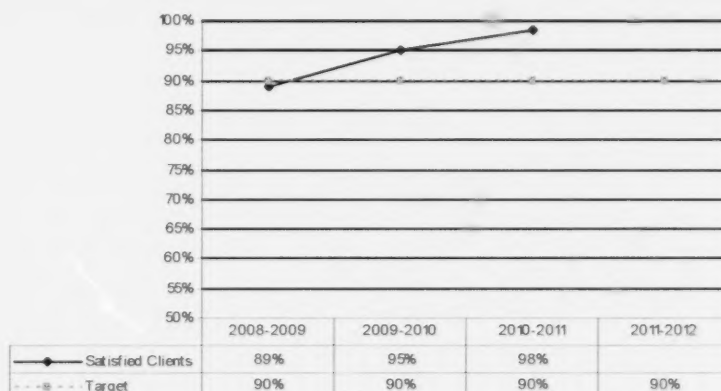
Appendix A: OEA Performance Measures 2010-2011 (cont'd)

Key Activities: Advice and Representation Services

A3

Performance measure for 2010-2011: A customer satisfaction rate of 90% or higher.

Percentage of Satisfied Clients



Agency Contribution

The primary complaint heard by agency staff is that employers were not aware of its services sooner. Most employers using the agency's services are very satisfied with the services they receive.

In addition to OPS customer service standards, the OEA has a number of internal standards, policies and performance measures, including those for telephone services and for file review, client follow up, etc., to maximize the service experience of OEA clients. The OEA's case management system was designed to provide tools to OEA staff that help them monitor and meet these expectations.

What does the graph show?

OEA clients are very satisfied with the service they receive.

Note that this graph shows the combined rate for both OEA business streams – Advice Centre and Employer Representation.

2010-11 Commitments

The commitment for 2010-11 was a 90% client satisfaction rate. This target was exceeded.

Long-term Target

The long-term target is 90%.

☐ Proposed for Publication

☐ Internal Use Only

☒ Existing Measure

☐ New Measure

Appendix B: OEA Financial Report 2010 –2011

All Figures in \$000.0 thousand (except “% of Variance” column)

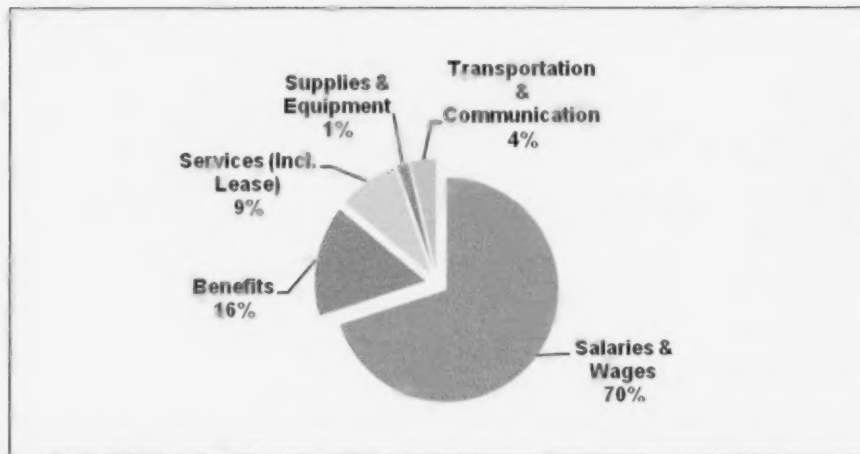
Account	Final Budget *	Total Actual Expenditures **	Variance	% Variance	Explanation
Salaries & Wages	2,510.7	2,293.5	217.2	8.6	<i>Not full FTE complement</i>
Benefits	577.5	522.2	55.3	9.6	
Transp. & Comm.	150.0	121.5	28.5	19.0	
Services (incl. Lease)	393.6	284.9	108.7	27.6	<i>Discretionary spending controlled; not full complement of FTEs</i>
Supplies & Equip.	88.9	52.8	36.1	40.6	<i>Discretionary spending controlled; not full complement of FTEs</i>
ODOE	632.5	459.1	173.4	27.4	
Transfer Payments	0.0	0.0	0.0		
Total	3,720.7	3,274.8	445.9	12.0	
Recoveries	(3,719.7)	(2,274.7)	(445.0)	12.0	
TOTAL	1.0	0.1	0.9		

- * Final Budget = Printed Estimates, +/- TBO and/or re-alignment of funds by standard account.

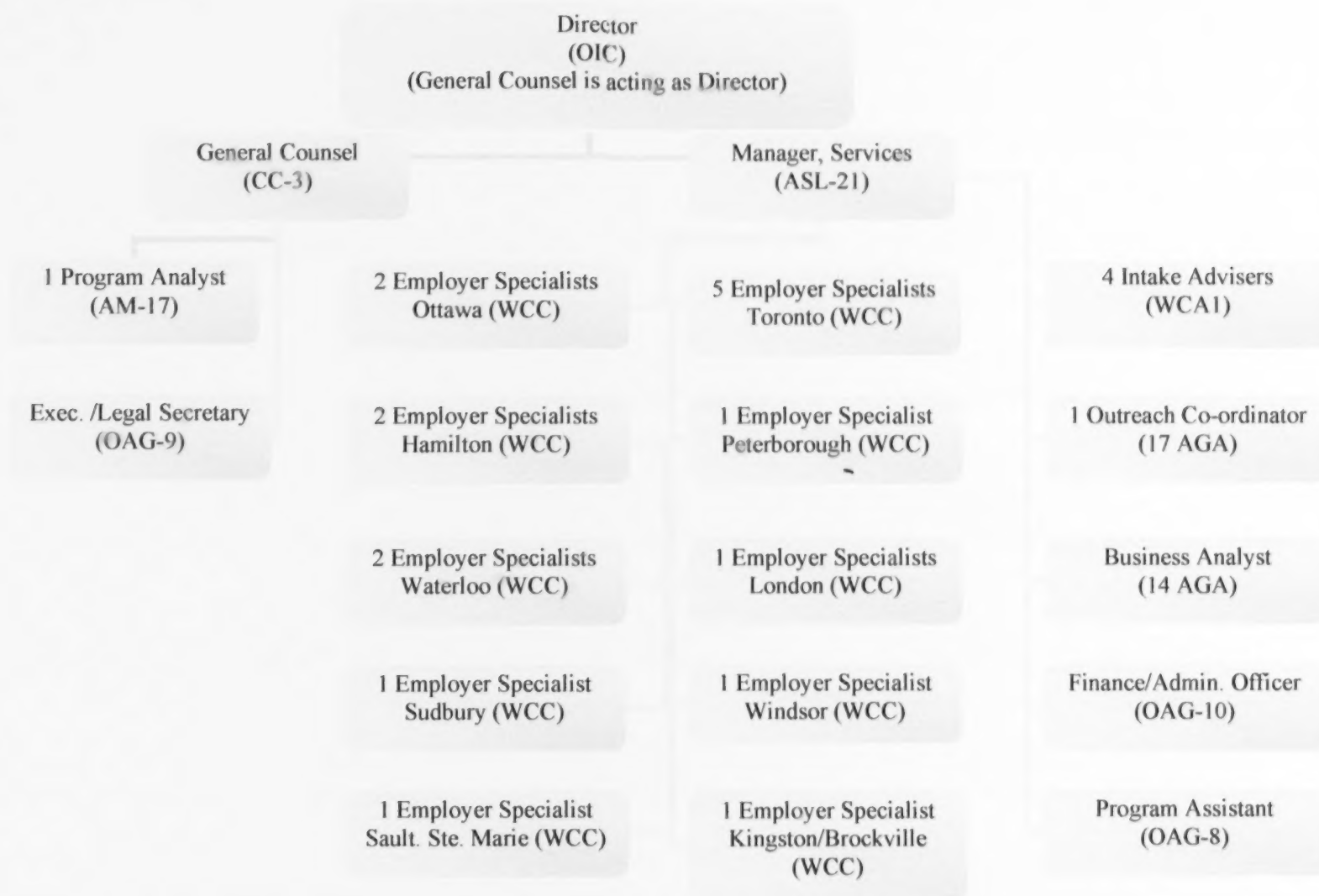
Revenues Generated From:	Forecast	Total Actual Revenue	Variance	% of Variance	Explanation
Not applicable					

- ** Total Actual Expenditures including lease cost.

Figure 8
2010-11 Budget Actuals



Appendix C: OEA Organization Chart



- An OIC appointment has not been made to the OEA and the General Counsel is currently acting as the Director.

Office of the Employer Adviser

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